We claim:

1. A method for preventing routing loops from forming when joining a node to a MPLS tree, comprising the steps of:

a) obtaining at a label switching router (LAR) a label mapping for a forwarding equivalence class (FEC);

b) determining if previous bindings exist for said FEC;

c) determining if said joining node is a single node or a parent node of a subtree;

d) accepting the mapping for said single node if no previous bindings exist; and

if said previous bindings exist when said subtree is attached to said MPLS tree:

e) sending a label splice message (Lsm) from said LAR to a root-node on a label switched path and returning a label splice message acknowledgment (ACK) to said LAR , and:

f) accepting the mapping after receiving said ACK at said LAR;

g) terminating any further action if said LAR is waiting for a previous ACK message;

h) forwarding said Lsm to the next LAR if said LAR is not waiting for said previous ACK message.